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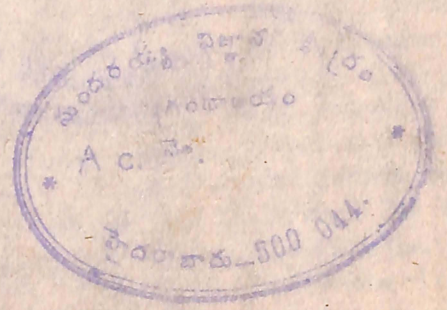
# ONE YEAR OF JANATA PARTY RULE

## Promise & Performance



**Somnath Chatterjee**
Senior Advocate and
Member of Parliament

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Mr. Chairman, Sir, a little while ago we heard the speech of Mr. Stephen, the newly appointed leader, after his deputation, of a fascist Party.

We had seen, that during the government of their leader we had the darkest period in our country's history. We are happy we have got back our freedom of speech and that is why Mr. Stephen could speak in support of the Emergency on 27th February, 1978 when the people have repudiated them in no uncertain terms. It was nothing but shameless out-pourings of the leader of the party which had been instrumental in keeping the common people of this country in darkest agony and in utter economic ruin. Without improving the economic conditions of the people that party was responsible for taking away all the vestiges of human freedom from this country.

Sir, I request my hon'ble friends on the ruling party to take note that the time has come once more to seriously ponder as to the direction this country is taking after the people had liquidated the forces of fascism during the March 1977 elections. Now, we find these fascist forces are regrouping themselves. They are trying to re-group themselves and if they again come back to power that will be the end once for-all of all cherished human values in this country. Therefore, a tendency that we see in some parts of the country and what has happened during the last Assembly elections the results of which are not yet fully out it is time that we must pool our resources for maintaining the civil liberties and the democratic rights of the people in this country. The Constitution had been defiled and polluted; civil liberties were taken away; freedom of speech and independence of judiciary was taken away and MISA had become the normal law of this country. The people were treated as second-class citizens. We do not want that situation should come back. That is

why we have cooperated with the Janata party and shall cooperate with them in their endeavour to restore democratic rights of the people. We shall certainly cooperate in preventing recurrence of dictatorial trends in body politic of this country. We feel that without democratic rights, without restoration of civil liberties the common people of this country will not have any future. The working class has been denied its rights ; it has been denied its ordinary facilities of life. The poor people in the country—a very large number indeed—are still below the poverty line. They cannot fight, they cannot struggle against the injustices and suppressions, against the landlords and the capitalists and the bourgeois without their democratic rights. But I have to make it clear as we have made it clear that we shall join hands with you in your fight for all democratic rights and maintenance of democratic rights of the people. But if you stray from the real path from the equally great task of improving the condition of the people and in maintaining and enlarging the democratic rights of the people and of the working class, you will find us against you. Sir, the address of the President quite pertinently and appropriately refers to the steps taken for the removal of the aberrations of the Emergency and it reminds the people of the dangers of authoritarianism and of the Emergency and of the ruthless attempts that were made during the last regime by a power hungry dictator to erode the rights of the people. But, Sir, we have to say that so far as the working class in this country is concerned; so far the people who have been oppressed and deprived for years in this country and to the unemployed and the rural masses are concerned, the President's Address is nothing but a Testament of despair as it but discloses a policy of no change and continuance of, by and large, the old policies. But we fail to find in it any well-defined direction of any proper and deep awareness of the multitudinal problems which beset the country and the people.

Sir, take the case of the recent actions of the Ruling party. Sir, the Janata Party says that they are pledged to

maintain the democratic rights of the people, but what we saw during the visit of Shah of Iran in this country ; gives us a different picture. The Iranian students in this country who have been protesting against the suppression of all democratic rights in their own country were treated in a manner which no civilised State can do. How would you have liked if our countrymen who had been trying their best to hold aloft the banner of civil liberties and democratic rights of the people of this country in foreign lands, had been treated like that by the foreign country ? Some of the leaders of the Janata Government had been making efforts outside the country during the Emergency. How would you have liked if one of the then Ministers of this country who had visited one of those foreign countries and the protesting Indians were kept in prison or had been brutally treated ? And not only that. The students of this country, the young men of this country, the citizens of this country who are supporting the Iranian students in the fight against their authoritarianism in their own country, are also being hauled up and put behind the bars. Sir, let there be some consistency. between what the ruling party preaches and what it practises. We have seen the same attitude has been taken so far as the Palestenians are concerned. Therefore, I would request the Janata Government that they should be consistent with their professions, if they have to earn the faith of the people.

Sir, so far as the people's rights are concerned, you cannot have a double standard just to suit the ruler of the foreign country who may be in a position to invest petro-dollars in abundance in our country. Sir, what is the other position ? In this country, there is a genuine demand for discussion on the important question of Centre-State relations. There was not a single reference in the President's address. The Government cannot ignore the reality and just by omission of reference, you cannot forestall something which has genuine, popular demand behind it.

Sir, Chief Minister of West Bengal has mooted this proposal and we have never said that we want confrontation with the Centre, nor do we want to weaken the Centre or the country. But what is the harm in starting a dialogue and discussion. There are many Chief Ministers even Janata Ministers, the Janata Government of Gujarat, of Orissa have said ; there are others, for instance Punjab. Some have courage to say it openly and some do not have the courage to say openly, but they are all saying : let us sit across a table and discuss this question. But why this kind of arrogance ?

**Shri Biju Patnaik :** Discuss. but not debate.

**Shri Somnath Chatterjee :** Mr. Biju Patnaik tries to find out the difference between discussion and debate. The Prime Minister says that he does not agree even to have a discussion on this..... ...(Interruptions)

**Shri Biju Patnaik :** I would like to go on record saying that the Prime Minister had said all the time that he was prepared to discuss with anybody at any time..... (Interruptions). English is a difficult language.

**Shri Somnath Chatterjee :** Mr. Biju Patnaik in his heart of hearts supports the demand.

**Shri Biju Patnaik :** What demand ?

**Shri Somnath Chatterjee :** There must be proper evaluation of the powers between the Centre and the States. Should the States which have got a large responsibility have to run to the Centre even for meagre expenses.....(Interruptions). The demand is only to have a dialogue and debate. A memorandum has been sent by the Chief Minister of West Bengal ; everybody I am sure, including Mr. Patnaik has got a copy. That memorandum says that those are not our unalterable proposals. They are open issues for debate and discussion. Those proposals have been born out of experience of different states in their functioning the context of the existing powers and financial resources. How can the states

discharge their responsibilities to the people when people sitting in Delhi, at the farthest place from the seats of state governments, decide what should be our priorities. Our land reforms amendment Bill was passed by an overwhelming majority in the State assembly. It was kept here for 4 and a half months for granting President's assent. In the mean-time problems had gone on accumulating and harvesting season had gone. The Central Government owes an explanation to the people of West Bengal as to why the zamindars and jotedars were playing havoc during this time and even ordinary protection could not be given to the Bargadars, the President's Assent was delayed. The people have formed the left-front government not to perpetuate the old Congress policies or the Janata policies which cannot take care of the problems which we have in West Bengal. This matter namely, the question of Centre—State relations should have found some reference in the President's Address. I know that this is an address prepared by the Council of Ministers and I also know that if the President himself had prepared the address, he would have put it in the forefront because his views have been quite well known by now.

There is another matter on which we have strong feelings. I am happy that the esteemed Member of the Janata Party, Dr. Sushila Nayar spoke so vehemently in support of the repeal of MISA and all preventive detention laws. It is a matter of great concern to the people. The Janata Party has come power on a clear commitment to the people. I shall read from the manifesto of the Janata party. "To generate fearlessness and to revive democracy, the Janata Party will repeal MISA, release all political detenus and review all other unjust laws and will re-establish the rule of law." Now what is happening ? MISA has been recognised by everybody to be the biggest weapon of oppression in the hands of the Indira regime. MISA was used indiscriminately against politicians, contrary to the clearest promise given on the floor of the House, against students, teachers, peasants, working class and against political opponents—Mr. Patnaik himself is a

victim. Now repeal of MISA—does it mean only changing the name ? You repeal MISA and by the same law you introduce it into the permanent Statute book of the country i.e., the Criminal Procedure Code.

Let us not delude ourselves by the so-called changes or differences between MISA and the Criminal Procedure Code. The Criminal Procedure Code lays down the procedure for dealing with the criminals or those who are accused of crimes and now a person who is suspected to be allegedly concerned with a so-called prejudicial act is put on the same footing as a criminal or a person who is accused of crime. Now you want to gloat over it by bringing it in the Criminal Procedure Code ; probably you do not like the expression 'Preventive Detention Act' or MISA because they are the most dreaded and hated words in this country. It is nothing but an attempt to side-track ; they are going back on their promises. This is declaration of lack of faith on the people of this country. Does this action of the Government generate fearlessness ? Does this Government as they have promised in their election manifesto act by maintaining the preventive detention law in the manner it has been done. In some cases—when the discussion comes, I hope to establish it—this is worse than pre-Emergency MISA. If you don't have faith in the people, if you cannot deal with the ordinary crimes or ordinary suspected crimes under the ordinary law you are not fit to govern. This is the position. Today one year has passed and the Janata Party has kept MISA in the statute book of this country.

**Shri Biju Patnaik :** It has not been used.

**Shri Somnath Chatterjee :** Whether used or not, we shall see that. You had mini-MISA in Madhya Pradesh to deal with the agitating State Electricity Board Workers. This is your attitude. I should have thought that the Janata Party who had come with the great expectations of the people, should have atleast protected their democratic rights, their civil

liberties should be protected and one of the first things this Janata Party does in Madhya Pradesh is to pass what is called a mini-MISA, the object is not to catch hold of criminals or anti-socials, which we also oppose, but to deal with the agitation of the working class in the Madhya Pradesh Electricity Board.

Please do not follow their footsteps, calling everything sabotage, calling everything anti-social and anti-national. The same thing was done by them and the same excuses were put forward when the MISA was supported with the added assurance that was there that it will never be used against political parties and how it has kept, my Hon. friends know. At least I had the privilege of protesting against those laws in my humble capacity in this House. Therefore, I am requesting my friends that instead of using the worn-out cliche in support of a black law, a draconian law, you please redeem your pledge to the people of this country. Otherwise do not forget the writings on the wall. Things are coming to such a state and it is a shame. Now that Mr. Stephen in the euphoria of some freak results will speak in support of Emergency, he will get an audience outside. This is due to your activity. One of the promises was to rescind the 42nd amendment, but what is the exercise that is being done now. They are trying with a powerful microscope to find out the so-called good features of it. It is an amazing attitude. The 42nd amendment is nothing but the symbol of authoritarianism in this country. It was meant to institutionalise a total concentration of powers in the hands of one individual by distorting some of the basic features of the Constitution. We hear from the Law Minister of the Janata Government that there are three very good things in it—participation of workers in management, provision of legal aid and improvement of the conditions of the backword classes. But these are contained in the directive principles; they are not fundamental rights. It has been proved for years that directive principles are nothing but shibboleths. It seems that you have no courage to face the Congress Party in the

Rajya Sabha and you come with Constitutional Bills in driblets. You want to change the basic law of the country with the good wishes of a fascist party. If you do not pay heed to the mood of the people, you will have to face the consequences. You have no courage and that is why you are coming in driblets so far as deletion of the most pernicious provisions of the 42nd amendment is concerned.

I would like to read out from the manifesto of the Janata Party ; what the Party said about the 42nd Amendment.

> "It is a betrayal of the testament of faith" that the founding fathers bequeathed to the people and it subverts the basic structure of the 1950 Constitution. It vitiates the federal principle and upsets the nice balance between the people and Parliament, Parliament and the Judiciary, the the judiciary and the executive, the States and the Centre, the citizen and the Government. It is the culmination of a conspiracy to devalue democracy that started with the erosion of the cabinet system, the deliberate and consummate scuttling of democratic processes in the ruling party and the concentration of all power in the hands of a leader who has been sought to be identified with the nation or even to be placed above it."

Those were the words of the Janata Party out of power. Now the Janata Party in power is busy in the exercise of finding out the good things in it. The 42nd amendment was nothing but a declaration of war on the people and this party is pledged to the total repeal of it. Many Hon. members of the Janata Party are asking for it. Still no explanation has been given as to why it is not being repealed. If you want to give legal aid or make workers participate in management, bring them in the Fundamental Rights chapter. That would be more honest and germane. Don't try to mislead the people. Don't follow the footsteps of your predecessors.

What about the working class ? As I said, mini-MISA was used to deal with the State Electricity Board workers in M.P., U.P. Government banned a number of strikes. Bihar

Government prevented its employees from taking part in any strike or demonstration. A number of police firings have taken place on the workers. Attacks were mounted on the workers in Faridabad, Gaziabad, Sonepat and Kanpur. It has become a routine practice with the different State Governments of Janata Party to treat the problems of the working class as law and order problems. The Prime Minister says, "I shall never discuss with the workers so long as they are on strike for a legitimate cause." They have been at the receiving end for years together, for decades, and the working class is not going to surrender its rights. The Prime Minister has said : "If you go on strike, I shall not negotiate." Therefore, are you trying to ban strikes and all legitimate working class movements ? Demonstration by the workers has been held to be a fundamental right of the workers.

**Shri Biju Patnaik** : Always, but not strike.

**Shri Somnath Chatterjee** : Sir, I will give you one more instances. What happened to the LIC bonus ? There was a solemn agreement between the LIC employees and the Life Insurance Corporation that they will get bonus from 1973 to 1977 at the rate of 15 per cent. There was a solemn agreement but, Sir, shamelessly a law was passed and Mr. Stephen had slipped out of the House at that time. He could not openly support that illegal Bill for taking away the right to bonus. Now, what happened ? A law was passed in this House to take away the right of the LIC employees to the bonus and the Janata Party Government found great virtues in that LIC modification of Settlement Act and when the workers went to the Supreme Court of India, the Janata Party supported that Emergency measure and it was argued solemnly in the Supreme Court that this Emergency measure cannot be challenged even after the withdrawal of the Emergency and they have learnt a lesson. And now that the Supreme Court is free of the clutches of Mr. Stephen and his leader.

**Shri Biju Patnaik** : Because of the Janata Party.

**Shri Somnath Chatterjee :** That is why I said, yes. I thank you for what you have done and you should thank the people for they have put in power and if the people had not put you in power, you would not have been able to take this credit. Now the Supreme Court has held that this was an illegal Act, **ultra vires** the Constitution and along with Mr. Stephen the Janata Party Government has learnt a lesson. Now they have been directed to pay this bonus. This is the way you treat the people of this country and even today, although the Judgment has been delivered on the 21st February, up till today, so far as I know, unless it has been done today, the payment has not been made. This is your respect to judiciary. Therefore, we want to say that the people of this country had great hopes that there would be a substantial change, the method of functioning would be altered, the sufferings of the poor people, the working class, the rural people, the unemployed, would be mitigated. But what are you doing ? You have not been able to solve any of their problems. You have participated in the struggle for restoration of the democratic rights in this country and for the civil liberties. But what has happened today ? Within one year, as Mr. Stephen is saying, the real problems in the country are not being solved. People's economic condition is not being improved, the unemployment problem is not being properly tackled even and the people are fed up with mere pious wishes and promises. That will not suffice and that will be taken advantage of by persons like Mr. Stephen and his leader. This is the warning you are getting. This is the warning you should pay heed to.

So far as the Harijans and backward classes are concerned, what do you find ? I do not know Mr. Stephen and Mr. Alagesan can refer to it because this is a prepetuation of their policy. During their times the Harijans or backward classes and the minorities suffered and now the same suffering is continued. And everybody, whoever is in power, has only verbal sympathies for them. What happend yesterday in the Meerut District which, I am told,

is the constituency of Chaudhuri Charan Singh, the Home Minister ? A member of minority community was taken inside the jail. What is happening ? A person of the minority community, a young man, was beaten up in jail. His wife was molested by Police taking advantage of the fact that her husband was whisked away to the Thana and kept in the lock-up. There is a feeling of insecurity. Will you follow the same policy as the Congress Govt. ?

Sometimes Commissions are necessary. The Shah Commission is a must ; it was a necessity, because those ugly things must be properly exposed and investigated ; and people must know the real things. I do not decry Commissions for the sake of decrying them. They are necessary. It is necessary to completely expose the party which was in power in this country. But Commissions are not the final solutions in this country. Unless the powers of landlords, who have been committing these atrocities on the people, are checked, and unless the rural vested interests are controlled. Harijans and the backward classes will continue to be the victims of these tortures. This is the real situation ; otherwise, you cannot change the situation. Unless you uplift them and their economic condition, and provide better facilities to them, you cannot avoid the atrocities committed on them.

On the economic scene, we find that quite a rosy picture has been painted. The rate of growth has been shown to have increased from 2% to 5%, and agricultural production is said to have gone up to 118 million tonnes of foodgrains. There is supposed to be larger production of commercial crops ; and there is also a large procurement. The rate of inflation or the price level is the same as in March, 1977. Is this a satisfactory balance sheet ? Is it a performance for which the Janata Party can take credit ? Have the prices of essential commodities fallen ? Has the purchasing power of people increased ? Have the rigours of unemployment lessened ?

We find, on the other hand, that the state of the economy is something different from what is said. Food production has not reached the level of 1970. The production of commercial crops has increased ; but, as the Hon. Member before me said, what is the fate of the growers of these commodities ? . Prices have steeply gone down. The benefit is not going to the producers of these commercial crops. But it is going to the middle-men, hoarders and to the big people who are cornering these articles in the market. There will be no improvement unless Government is prepared to curb the profits of the monopoly Houses. It is necessary that the essential consumer goods are made available to the people through a wide-ranging public distribution system if necessary with subsidy to be provided by Government. Otherwise there will be no remedy against these artificial shortages, artificial scarcity and the soaring prices that we are experiencing in this country.

Our demand has been that the poor people of this country.....

**Mr. Chairman :** How long will you take ?

**Somnath Chatterjee :** One minute now ; and then I will continue tomorrow. Unless the poor people throughout the country are able to purchase essential commodities at a fair, uniform and reasonable price throughout the country, you cannot give any relief to the people. You cannot have different prices for the same commodities in different States. It is not playing fair with the people. The control is now being minimized. It will only help those who are monopolizing in these trades.

**On 28. 2. 1978**

**Shri Somnath Chatterjee :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, yesterday I was referring to the economic policy of this Government and I also said that in view of the great miseries heaped on a large number of people, on a majority of people in the country, it is essential that necessary consumer goods should be distributed by the Government through the public dis-

tribution system and, if necessary, with some subsidy. In this context, may I read out one paragraph from the **Economic Survey** for 1977-78 ? It says :

> "To sum up while there is sufficient cause for satisfaction in the performance of the economy in the current year, the shortfalls in the production of commodities, like, edible oils, pulses and cotton, the low rate of increase in industrial production, the increased liquidity in the economy, the sluggishness in industrial investment and the accumulation of reserves are matters for concern. The emphasis of policy will, therefore, have to be on increasing output of these commodities, providing incentives for large investment in industry and formulating an overall strategy of growth which will utilise the increasing foreign exchange reserves. The last is most important if the paradoxical situation of a poor country lending abroad—which is what the growth in foreign exchange reserves really amounts to—is to be corrected."

These are very important observations in the **Economic Survey** itself. But we do not find any reflection or appreciation of the seriousness in the President's Address.

There is another very important matter to which there is a passing reference only in the Address and that is regarding the unemployment problem. Nothing has been suggested how to solve the unemployment problem. One important thing is that there is no consideration of the payment of unemployment allowance. These people are unemployed for no fault of theirs. In this connection, I ought to tell the House, through you, Sir, that in West Bengal, although we having financical constraints, as a matter of policy and principle which we follow, the State Government has decided to grant unemployment allowance to unemployed people whose names are in the employment exchange register for five years. They will get it for three years. In return, they

have to render some social service or public service for two days in a week. I hope this example will be taken note of and the Central Government will take serious steps to immediately provide unemployment allowance to the unemployed people and make sufficient funds available to the State Governments who have got the desire, inclination and the objective of introducing such a scheme as we have done, in spite of financial constraints, in West Bengal only to the extent of Rs. 9 crores for 1,5000 people (1½ lakh). Sometimes, an attitude is taken by the Centre that these are matters only for the States and the States have to find their own resources. It is the Central Government's policies followed for so many years which have created unemployment in the country with the result that the youth of our country has no future to look for. This should be seriously taken note of.

With regard to planning, one thing which ought to be kept in mind is that the plans are finalised without really taking the States into confidence or without even consulting the States when the Planning Commissions proposals are considered in the Planning Commission. What happens is that the National Development Council is called to sit for a day or two to finalise the Plan or to put a stamp or seal of approval on the Plan. This year, the last Plan has been cut short by one year and it is going to be replaced by another Five Years Plan. The concept of the rolling plan and such other things have come in. It appears that the talk of the rolling plan we apprehend, is really for the purpose of scuttling down or reversing the whole process of planning. The concept of the rolling plan whose real objectives are not know to us, whose real implications are not know to us, has raised serious apprehensions in the minds of the people. The only thing which appears from the statement made by the Government spokesmen is that the public sector is being allowed to have a greater freedom in the name of having rural orientation, emphasis on agriculture, small Industries and creating an investment climate.

That is what has been stated in the Address. One thing is to be noted and that is this. The President's Address says, "Henceforth emphasis only will be on production of basic needs such as oil, coal, metals, fertilisers and cement". But no more emphasis would be given to capital goods industry or to the public sector and they will be thrown open to the private sector and to competition from abroad with the removal of any import restrictions. We find that the present Government is following unfortunately the same policies which the Congress Government had followed. It has to be decided and if you feel the pinch of it, you have to appeal to the government. We request the Government that this is a matter, namely, industrial production which should not be continued to be under the mercy of the private sector which has resulted in the growth of monopoly houses, which has resulted in the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few and which has widened disparity between man and man in this country.

There is no mention of land reforms in the whole of the Address which is the prime need of the country, which is the prime need of the hour, although the Janata Party election manifesto referred to it specifically. But how within one year they are sliding back from it they ought to realise when the poor people of this country are not given any benefit. The land problems are not being solved ; the land continues to remain under the control of the big landlords who have vested interests. In the absence of land reforms if there is emphasis on agriculture and more expenditure is provided for agriculture, it means that the real benefit will go to the vested interests as in the past. That is what the source of strength of the last Government was. I want to say this very categorically that if this Government feels that they can advance this country by compromising with the Kulaks and with big landlords and big traders and monopoly houses— we find that you are gradually diluting the public sector and are not tackling the vested interests and they are going on in the same manner as before with greater concessions now—

you will come to grief very soon and the people of this country who have been denied the minimum facilities, the minimum right of subsistence in this country will not tolerate it for long. That you have already realised. Therefore, these are very important aspects and we find that these have not even been taken note of, not even referred to in passing in the Address, which should be the charter for the activities of the past and for future. There is no mention of these things.

With regard to sick industries in this country, so many industries have become sick. The monopoly houses and big industrialists have been allowed a free hand for years and years together ; they have diverted funds from their companies ; they have deprived the workers of their legitimate wages ; they have misappropriated monies which should belong to the nation as such. What are the steps taken ? Not a single action has been taken against these employers and big industrialists. On the other hand, when the industries become sick and the workers are thrown out of employment, there is nobody to look after them and there is no facility for them. When we go and approach the Central Government that they should take over the sick industries, because the State Governments have no right to take over such industries under the law of the land of this country, there is a stone wall in Delhi. What is to be done ? Unfortunately, there is no reference to it. It is essential for revival of the economy, it is essential for the purpose of giving necessary relief to the workers. It is not workers' fault that the industries have become sick, this is the result, culmination of mismanagement, misappropriation under the benign leadership and benign control of the Central Government. It has happened in the past and I am sorry there is no awareness on the part of the Government that is requires a break from the previous tradition, from the previous policies and a break from the previous attitude of hobnobbing with large industrialists and monopoly houses. These are all important matters which should have been taken note of.

Now, there is a reference to electoral reforms, but there is no indication when these will come. What about the proportional representation and what about reducing the age deprived of their right of suffrage, but no steps are being taken. One year has already passed, how much time do you require for things which should be taken note of immediately ?

We have been told of introducing prohibition in the country. I am a confirmed tee-totaller, I am not speaking for myself. What is this ? You are going to lose Rs. 2000 crores by way of revenue and you have to enforce prohibition by spending another Rs. 1000 crores. And then you will be encouraging bootlegging, you will be encouraging the creation of a new class of criminals. There are many more important things to tackle in this country. By the introduction of prohibition, you are going to throw out hundreds and thousands of people who are engaged in this business. What is your remedy ? You are creating more unemployment for satisfying your own fads. I am not advocating that the people should drink more, what I am saying is follow some practical policy, do something which will be possible to implement.

Sir, without eradicating poverty and educating the people and raising their standard of living, you cannot do it. Why are people in the lower strata of society, lower echelons, deprived of all benefits, deprived of ordinary pleasures, relaxation and recreation in the society, go to this extent ? Because, that seems to be their only outlet. Therefore, don't go by these fads.

I have to say a word about the foreign policy. We welcome the steps taken to normalise relations with our neighbours as also the steps taken to strengthen relations with the socialist Republic of Vietnam. But we find that there is some dangerous stress which has been given in the Address on two things, which are very important. One is, on bilateral relations with Iran, and secondly, the stress laid on increasing mutual cooperation with Japan. I am quoting

from the Address. The position is this. Iran is now trying to take the leadership in West Asia. With a view to get probably Iran's oil-wealth and petro-dollars for this country we are now entering into this kind of relationship. This sort of special relationship is built up with Iran. And, on the other hand, as I said yesterday, the Iranian students are being hauled up because they protested against the suppression of civil liberties in the country.

There is stress laid on special relationship with Japan. Sir, Japan is playing now the US imperialist game and is helping the puppet South Korean regime to keep Korea divided. Such special relationships with Iran and Japan make our country suspect in the eyes of the third world countries and come in the way of our country playing an important role which it has to play in the third world's confrontation with repression by the imperialist powers, and in developing a stable economic order. This Government has to get rid of its inertia. It has to take radical measures to loosen the stranglehold of big business and of the landlords and the rural vested interests and of the kulaks. You have to be friend of the working class. You cannot carry on by keeping the working class away from you. That is what is happening. You have not been able to earn the faith and the confidence of the working class. Your attitude is that there will be no discussion while there is a strike. When there are problems, industrial problems, the Prime Minister said, "No, I won't talk with such and such people". These are not the attitudes which you should show if you want to win the confidence of the working class and the support of the working class. They must made serious efforts in eradicating poverty in the country. In such a situation, Sir, there is no real attempt, no indication of the policy in the President's Address.

( Speech in Lok Sabha during the debate on the President's address on 27th and 28th February 1978 )

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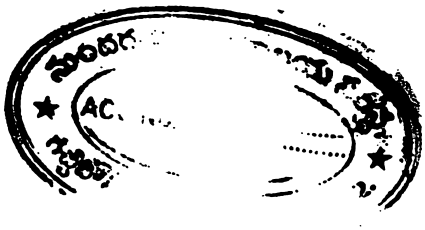

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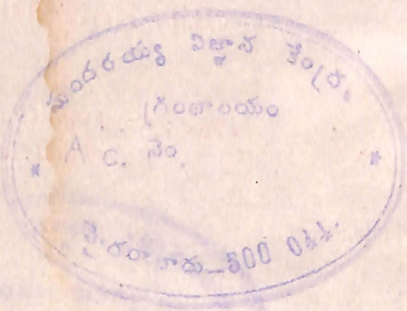

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